

Shaw Cross Infant and Nursery School

Address: Leeds Road, Shaw Cross, Shaw Cross Infant and Nursery School, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 7HP

Unique reference number (URN): 107608

Inspection report: 12 May 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils achieve very well in phonics. The embedded approach to teaching pupils to learn to read has ensured that most pupils pass their phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. Any pupils who need further support continue to access phonics lessons at an age- and stage-appropriate level. Leaders also invest significant time in ensuring that pupils develop a love of reading. The '100 book challenge' promotes different authors and book choices to pupils. Many pupils regularly read books, which helps them to practise their fluency skills.

By the end of Year 2, most pupils can demonstrate secure knowledge across the curriculum. This is reflected in the work that they produce and the discussions they have about their learning. For example, pupils articulate their locational knowledge and identify different places on a world map. They also share interesting facts about how to use a compass and use directional language when speaking about it. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make suitable progress from their starting points. As a result, pupils are ready to move into key stage 2.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum has improved in recent years. Leaders have revisited the curriculum in a number of subjects, including writing. The knowledge that pupils need to know and understand is now clearly identified in all subjects. Leaders have also revisited and refined the early years curriculum to ensure that children can learn the basic knowledge and skills they need to be ready for key stage 1. This includes ensuring that pupils are taught how to read, write and use mathematics. For example, children in the early years practise forming shapes to learn how to hold a pencil correctly. They then move on to learning how to write an accurate sentence, using the correct punctuation. In mathematics, pupils learn about numbers and apply them in simple problems.

Generally, the curriculum is taught well. The school has invested in additional resources to support teachers in developing their subject knowledge. This ensures that teachers can break down the learning into smaller chunks when needed. They also use a range of strategies to check what pupils know and understand. Occasionally, checks on pupils' understanding are not as effective as they could be, which means some pupils do not secure the essential knowledge and skills they need before moving on to more complex learning.

Early years

Expected standard 

Staff in the nursery quickly build positive relationships with new arrivals. They use their warm and nurturing approach to support children to settle into life at school. Staff and leaders establish positive relationships with parents and carers to support this transition. Parents are very positive about their children's experiences.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to fully engage with the early years setting. For example, leaders provide extra opportunities for them to

visit the school through 'stay-and-play sessions'. This helps children to familiarise themselves with the routines and the adults they will work with.

Children achieve well in the early years. Leaders have ensured that the early years curriculum is well considered across all areas of learning. Children develop a secure understanding of this curriculum through effective teaching. The activities they engage with are typically appropriate. They support children in developing skills such as gross motor coordination with balance bikes or fine motor skills through using scissors.

Children begin reading as soon as they start school. High-quality books are regularly read with children. This helps them to learn new words and spot patterns, such as rhyming words. Staff also use their conversational skills to support language development and invite others into play opportunities.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have created a culture where all pupils are included in school life. They quickly identify any pupils who may need additional support. This support is then provided to ensure that pupils can access their learning and/or pastoral support. This ensures that barriers are reduced for these pupils.

The 'Rainbow' provision supports a number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Learning is well matched to pupils' targets, including those from any education, health and care plans. Activities support pupils in developing their communication skills. Leaders regularly evaluate how effectively this support is meeting pupils' needs. Additional support is also sought to give further advice where necessary, such as from educational psychologists.

In the wider school community, teachers use a number of appropriate adaptations to support pupils with barriers to their learning. For example, resources such as writing slopes or 'Now and Next' boards are used to help pupils access their learning effectively.

Leaders use their carefully considered pupil premium strategy to identify the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face and make effective use of additional funding. A focus on ensuring pupils learn and retain knowledge through the curriculum helps these pupils achieve well.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have recently refined the personal, social and health education curriculum. Additional units of learning have been incorporated into the curriculum to positively support pupils' understanding of mental health. Pupils learn strategies to identify their feelings and emotions. This helps pupils to understand a range of mental health strategies.

Typically, pupils develop a secure understanding of difference and respect. They discuss what respect means to them and how they can show it in their interactions with others. Pupils also understand that people are different and equality is not the same as everyone being treated in exactly the same way. They explore different faiths and cultures, including when staff share books about diversity with them during assemblies. Staff promote

discussion and help pupils to develop their debating skills. For example, pupils recently discussed the challenges presented by moving from one country to another.

Pupils can also demonstrate a secure understanding of how to look after themselves. They know how to stay safe in the local community, including online. Pupils develop a secure understanding of healthy relationships.

Trips and visits are also planned as part of the school's personal development offer. Pupils regularly enjoy meeting and listening to visitors at the school. For example, leaders launched 'the big bird watch', and invited visitors to speak to the pupils about animals and other wildlife. Pupils also benefit from a range of clubs, including choir, arts and crafts club and an array of sports clubs. Participation in these clubs is tracked to ensure pupils who face additional barriers also make good use of them.

Pupils receive caring pastoral support. This pastoral support is responsive and accessible to pupils as needed. For example, pupils benefit from adaptations to the start of their school day or work positively with staff to discuss their feeling and emotions.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention 

There is variation in how well different groups of pupils attend school. Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils miss school more regularly. Recently, leaders have invested time to create better systems to analyse pupil attendance. These systems are appropriate. However, they are in the very early stages of development. This means that it is too soon to see the impact of these systems on improving attendance for all pupils. Staff work closely with families to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. The impact of this work is evident in improved attendance among some pupils, but this has not been sustained over time.

Pupils live and breathe the school's values of respect, resilience and reflection. They are explicitly taught how to follow these values, starting in the early years. A nurturing approach to managing pupil behaviour ensures pupils learn and continue to develop their behaviour. As a result, they demonstrate positive attitudes both inside and outside of the classroom. For some pupils, additional support is also given to reduce barriers and develop their self-regulation strategies. This includes additional support with external professionals to understand pupils' sensory needs. This helps them to engage positively in school life. Bullying is not tolerated. Where there are concerns, these are followed up on quickly and effectively.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Governors, over time, have not held school leaders to account well enough. They have not ensured that they have the information they need to support and challenge leaders sufficiently. However, governors now generally understand their roles and are very committed to the school. They use new systems to fulfil their roles more effectively.

Governors have begun to check more closely on the school's work and its impact on pupils. These systems are appropriate but are in the very early stages of implementation.

Leaders have been committed to ensuring the overall offer within the school's curriculum has improved since the last inspection. They act in the best interests of pupils. Many refinements have been managed effectively to ensure that pupils achieve well. Staff have also been well supported through these changes, including consideration of any implications for their workload. Leaders have identified the right areas for further improvement across the school, such as pupil attendance.

Staff receive many opportunities to develop their practice through professional learning. For example, staff engage in training to understand childhood development and experiences. This helps them consider how well they implement strategies, such as revisiting previous learning with pupils, to secure learning more fully.

Parents and carers are generally happy with the support the school gives their children. They are proud that their children attend the school.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at Shaw Cross Infant and Nursery School are well supported in their first stages of school. Pupils behave very well. They demonstrate the school's vision for behaviour of 'working together, valuing and nurturing children'. Pupils develop their skills of turn-taking, sharing and listening to others well. Many pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils build warm relationships with staff in a supportive and nurturing environment. They ask for help when they need it. Bullying is rare. Any occasional instances are dealt with quickly by staff. This means that pupils feel safe.

Some pupils do not attend school as well as they could. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils miss larger chunks of their learning. This means they cannot benefit as well as they should from the school's offer.

Pupils generally achieve well. They benefit positively from the many changes to the curriculum over recent years. They now enjoy and understand their learning better. For example, pupils in Year 2 speak with confidence about their learning about William the Conqueror. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are positive. Pupils with SEND are well supported through carefully considered adaptations. This reduces their barriers to learning and supports them to achieve well.

Pupils also enjoy the range of additional opportunities available to them. For example, a number of pupils visit the LEGO club and learn to make structures. They also attend a range of trips and visits. This includes exploring the local area to widen their understanding of the local community. Pupils have learned about the harvest festival through their visit to the local church. They also learn about charity by sending food to local food banks.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently use effective strategies to check pupils' understanding and ensure that knowledge is embedded before moving on to new learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that they maintain their focus on attendance so that pupils' rates of persistent absence reduce over time.
 - Leaders should ensure that the revised systems of governance are implemented effectively so that they can hold leaders to account more rigorously and maintain high standards.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Chris Jewesbury.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke to the governing board, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Amanda Pickup

Lead inspector:

Katie Hall, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Alison Ashworth, Ofsted Inspector

Alixena Lubomski, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.



This data is from 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

215

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

180

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

20.81%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.26%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.74%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.9%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.6%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	18.3%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	17.5%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	26.3%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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